

There has been a reassessment of livestock strategy in less than desirable conditions within riparian zones and the effects of management practices on big game. The cover-to-forage ratio method previously used to estimate potential elk habitat has been replaced by a Habitat Effectiveness Index (HEI).

Five alternatives presented in the draft EIS have been dropped in this FEIS. Due to the lack of public interest following release of the draft EIS, Alternatives D, E, F-departure, G and H are not brought forward in FEIS chapter discussions. In response to public comments, Alternatives B and C are modified and Alternative I has been added to this FEIS, as newly-developed alternatives. In addition, the baseline 10-year period used to gauge outputs and effects between all alternatives has been updated to the 1980-1989 time period. Consequently, past timber sales, harvests, and experienced costs are now presented at recently-experienced levels.

Lastly, a new cumulative effects analysis is discussed along with a summary of qualitative rankings of alternatives for several key resource indicators. These rankings are tied to both direct and indirect effects on resources, over a 50-year planning horizon, and the potential risk to the specific Forest resource.

C. How This Chapter is Organized This chapter is organized by affected resources. The environmental consequences (effects) that do not vary between alternatives are discussed first. Then, the effects of the alternatives on the various resources of the Forest are discussed.

D. Effects That Do Not Differ Between Alternatives

1. Prime Farmlands, Rangelands, and Forest Land There are no prime farmlands within or adjacent to the Forest. All alternatives are in keeping with the intent of Secretary of Agriculture Memorandum 1827 for prime rangeland, farmland, and forest land.

2. Wetlands and Floodplains Wetlands and floodplains comprise approximately 5 percent of the Forest land. Executive Orders 11990 and 11988 require protection of wetlands and floodplains. Timber harvesting, grazing, and road construction are activities that have the greatest potential for affecting them in all alternatives. No significant adverse effects are anticipated, as adherence to standards and mitigation measures should prevent all but minor and temporary impacts on these areas. Because of the small area involved, differences between alternatives may not be measurable. The effects on specific wetlands and floodplains will be evaluated during the analysis of site-specific projects. (See Forest Plan, Chapter IV, Section F.)

3. Urban Environments Situated in rural eastern Oregon, more than 100 miles from the nearest urban area, none of the alternatives would have a direct effect on any urban area. The existence of the Forest for urban dwellers' enjoyment may be an indirect effect. Management of the Forest also contributes to the national economy which indirectly affects urban dwellers as well.

4. Threatened and Endangered Species There are no Threatened or Endangered plant species on the Forest. Sensitive plant and animal species habitats are protected through Standards (Forest Plan, Chapter IV, Section E). The only Threatened or Endangered wildlife species on the Forest are the bald eagle and the American peregrine falcon. The USDI Fish and Wildlife Service concurs with this finding (USDI, FWS, 1988). Bald eagles roost in specific areas along the southern edge of the Forest during the winter only. These areas will be managed under Management Area 5 in each alternative. (See the Forest Plan for a complete